

mother by orphan_account

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Flashbacks, Gen, PTSD, and the way she embraced her afterwards, like she's the only one that really realizes that despite eleven's powers, she's a little girl, that scene when joyce was really encouraging eleven when she was in the pool got me, this show messed me up so bad help, who most likely never had a mom of her own

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Summary:

"You're doing wonderful, El, tell Will that his mother is coming for him!"

Mother.

She focuses in on that word, a word she had never had the chance to utter once in her entire life.

mother

Author's Note:

the scene in which joyce embraces eleven after she looks for will in the pool in the gymnasium really got to me. also this show has officially ruined my life there is no going back rip

Eleven looks into the darkness of her mind, feeling a knot of anxiety and fear begin to form in her stomach. It feels like-- like she's back in the lab and Papa is waiting for her to finish doing what he's told her to do. She wraps her arms around her torso, hugging herself tightly and shaking her head.

No, no, no... She feels sick, she feels like she can't breathe, she feels--

"Eleven," Papa's voice echoes around her, and she hugs herself tighter, bracing herself for her punishment. "Do as you are told."

She shakes her head again, looking down, and she doesn't realize she's crying until she feels hot tears trail down her face. Eleven can already imagine Papa's disappointed face, can already imagine him calling on the bad men to bring her into that room--

Her breathing is starting to become heavy and her heart is beating rapidly. *Dark*, she closes her eyes. *No more, no more dark*. She can almost hear the sound of the heavy steel door slamming shut, leaving her alone, alone, alone--

"...doing great, sweetheart!"

She opens her eyes slowly at the new voice. It's faint and it fades in and out. She looks around, looking for the source, but it's not coming from just one direction. She hears it all around her.

"Just tell me... too much...!"

She wipes her tears away quickly and composes herself, walking forward, into the darkness. The voice helps her feel not so afraid of the dark anymore.

As she walks, focusing her energy on finding Will, and trying to stop her hands from shaking, she hears Joyce again.

"You're doing wonderful, El, tell Will that his mother is coming for him!"

Mother.

She focuses in on that word, a word she had never had the chance to utter once in her entire life.

Mother.

At the laboratory, all Eleven had was her Papa. He'd bring her things sometimes, when she did what he wanted, and smiled at her when she did good. When he had caressed her face and murmured things like "incredible" and "wonderful" and "amazing" she had cherished it. It was the closest thing to affection she had ever experienced.

"Will," She whispers, gently shaking him awake. "Your mother--" she pauses, the word coming out of her for the first time in her life, "Your mother is looking for you."

"Tell-- tell him to stay right there, and that I love him."

Mother. Love.

Eleven feels herself tearing up again, but this time, she doesn't know why. "Your mother says-- she says to stay there," She takes a shaky breath before speaking again, her voice low and gentle. "She loves you." *Love.*

Will looks up at her as best he can, and Eleven thinks she can see the tiniest and weakest of smiles on his face for a brief moment. "Hurry," he murmurs, and then his body and Castle Byers vanish in a cloud of dust.

She gets up, looking around frantically. She had failed. "Will!?" She screams his name, and tries to reestablish the connection, despite feeling her head start to ache. "Will!?" she calls again, louder, feeling herself begin to panic.

Not good, she thinks, breathing heavily and gripping at her short hair tightly. *Punishment*.

She had failed and now she would be punished, and she would be put into the dark room again, and she had disappointed the only people who care about her.

No, no, no...

She shakes her head, feeling herself begin to cry.

Sorry, I'm sorry...

"...El, are you okay, sweetie? Don't worry, you're not alone..."

Her voice is so different from the Bad Man's, it makes her feel warm, makes her feel safe.

Mother.

She faintly remembers everything being too bright and being held in gentle, loving arms before she had been taken away from them. A woman had been screaming and men were murmuring and Eleven wouldn't stop crying.

My... mother.

She jerks awake, opening her eyes and taking the mask off of her face. She was tired and drained and--

"You're so brave, darling. So, so very brave. I'm very proud of you," Joyce wraps her arms around her. Her gentle, loving arms. Everything is too bright, and she can't stop crying, but there is no woman screaming and there are no bad men to take her away.

"Not good..." Is all she manages to mumble, because her throat feels all dry and scratchy.

"You found Will and you told him I'm coming, Eleven," Joyce murmurs, placing a kiss on the girl's forehead. Eleven leans into the embrace heavily, her eyes fluttering close and her lips forming a small smile. "You did so *well*, sweetheart."

Mother.